

2. FOLLOWING ARE OUR COMMENTS ON SOME OF THE POINTS RAISED ORALLY AND IN ALLIED PAPERS DURING AUGUST 7 POLADS DISCUSSION OF AFGHANISTAN:

-- WE AGREE WITH CANADIAN REPT'S OBSERVATIONS THAT AFGHAN REBEL MOVEMENT IS FRAGMENTED AND LACKS AN AGREED-UPON LEADER. THESE WEAKNESSES, ALONG WITH ONLY RUDIMENTARY LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AND LACK OF HEAVY WEAPONRY, HAVE PREVENTED THE INSURGENCY FROM BEING ABLE TO COORDINATE ATTACKS ON THE REGIME OR TO HOLD MAJOR TOWNS OR INSTALLATIONS FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME. NONETHELESS, INSURGENCY CANNOT BE CALLED "INEFFECTIVE." IT HAS WHITTLED AWAY AT DRA CONTROL OVER THE COUNTRYSIDE AND NOW THREATENS THE HEART OF DRA POWER--I.E., THE MILITARY, THE MAJOR ROADS, AND URBAN AREAS. THE DRA STILL RETAINS MILITARY SUPERIORITY AS LONG AS THAT ARMED FORCES (ESPECIALLY KEY ARMORED AND AIR FORCE UNITS IN KABUL) REMAIN WILLING TO FIGHT FOR THE REGIME AGAINST INSURGENTS AND MILITARY DISSIDENTS.

-- RE FRG REP'S INTEREST IN JULY CABINET RESHUFFLE, OUR VIEW REMAINS THAT IT WAS PRINCIPALLY DESIGNED TO ALLOW TARAHI AND AMIN MORE TIME FOR DEFENSE AND SECURITY MATTERS.

AND DIRECT PERSONAL CONTACT OVER THE MILITARY. POOR MORALE AND REPORTS OF DEFECTIONS AND DESERTIONS WOULD BE SUFFICIENT GROUNDS FOR ALARM IN THEIR MINDS, AND THEY MAY WELL HAVE CONCLUDED THAT FORMER DEFENSE MINISTER NATANJAR WAS INCAPABLE OF DEFLATING THE [ILLEG]. [ILLEG] NO EVIDENCE THAT CABINET CHANGES WERE IN RESPONSE TO ANY USSR [ILLEG] PLOT.

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RUEHBAC/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 3082

CN 336

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1. (S - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. FOLLOWING ARE OUR COMMENTS ON SOME OF THE POINTS
RAISED ORALLY AND IN WRITTEN PAPERS DURING AUGUST 7 POLADS
DISCUSSION OF AFGHANISTAN:

-- WE AGREE WITH CANADIAN REPRESENTATIONS THAT AFGHAN
REBEL MOVEMENT IS FRAGMENTED AND LACKS AN ASSEMBLED-UPON
LEADER. THESE (UN)ACKNOWLEDGED, ALSO WITH ONLY SUDIMENTARY
LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AND LACK OF HEAVY WEAPONRY, HAVE
PREVENTED THE INSURGENCY FROM BEING ABLE TO COORDINATE
ATTACKS ON THE TERRITORY OR TO HOLD MAJOR TOWNS OR INSTALLA-
TIONS FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME. "WORTHLESS, INSURGENCY
CANNOT BE CALLED "INEFFECTIVE." IT HAS WHITTLED AWAY AT
DRA CONTROL OVER THE COUNTRYSIDE AND NOW THREATENS THE
HEART OF DRA POWER--I.E., THE MILITARY, THE MAJOR ROADS,
AND URBAN AREAS. THE DRA STILL RETAINS MILITARY SUPERIOR-
ITY AS LONG AS THE ARMED FORCES (ESPECIALLY KEY ARMORED
AND AIR FORCE UNITS IN KABUL) REMAIN WILLING TO FIGHT FOR
THE REGIME AGAINST INSURGENTS AND MILITARY DISSIDENTS.
-- RE FRG REP'S INTEREST IN JULY CABINET RESHUFFLE, OUR
VIEW REMAINS THAT IT WAS PRINCIPALLY DESIGNED TO ALLOW
TARAKI AND AMIN MORE TIME FOR DEFENSE AND SECURITY MATTERS

AND DIRECT PERSONAL CONTROL OVER THE MILITARY. FROM
MORALE AND REPORTS OF DEFERTIONS AND SECTIONS WOULD BE
SUFFICIENT GRADIENT FOR THE DRA TO BE ABLE TO HOLD THE
REBELS. WE CONCLUDE THAT THE DRA IS ABLE TO HOLD THE
COUNTRY, BUT IT IS NOT ABLE TO HOLD THE COUNTRY.
EVIDENCE THAT THE DRA IS ABLE TO HOLD THE COUNTRY
IS NOT SUFFICIENT.

-- CANADIAN PAPER: RE PARA 4, WE AGREE THAT AFGHAN AND
SOVIET MEDIA HAVE ONCE AGAIN STARTED UP ACCUSATIONS OF
PAKISTANI INVOLVEMENT WITH AFGHAN REBEL ACTIVITIES.

-- FRG PAPER: (A) WE WOULD WELCOME ELABORATION OF
FRG'S FIGURES OF 3,000-3,500 SOVIET MILITARY ADVISERS.
WE HAVE SEEN FIGURES OF ABOUT 500 MILITARY
AND AN ESTIMATED 3,000 CIVILIAN ADVISERS. (B) WE ARE NOT
AWARE OF ANY SUPPORTING EVIDENCE FOR THE STATEMENTS THAT
THE SOVIET PRESS HAS INDICATED ACTIVE USE OF SOVIET TROOPS
IN SUPPORT OF THE TARAKI REGIME. (C) IT IS CONSIDERED OF
THE DRA DESCRIBES AFGHANISTAN REGULARLY AS A SOCIALIST
STATE.

-- WE REMAIN CONCERNED ABOUT SOVIET INTENTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF SOVIET INVOLVEMENT THERE FOR THE REGION. RECENT INDICATIONS ARE THAT THE SOVIETS WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT TO THE CURRENT REGIME. THIS COULD TAKE THE FORM OF MORE DIRECT INVOLVEMENT ON A GRADUATED BASIS.

-- THE GENESIS OF THE AUGUST 5 FIGHTING IN KABUL AS WELL AS THAT WHICH OCCURRED THERE ON AUGUST 15 REMAINS UNCLEAR. IT APPEARS THAT SOME MILITARY ELEMENTS AND PERHAPS CIVILIAN INSURGENTS WERE INVOLVED IN THE BALA HISSAR FIGHTING (AUGUST 5) BUT DETAILS ARE TOO FRAGMENTARY TO BE PRECISE. WHAT IS CLEAR IS THAT THE DRA CAN STILL COUNT ON ITS KEY UNITS (ARMORED AND AIR) TO COME TO ITS DEFENSE WHEN NEEDED.

-- PAKISTANI FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER AGHA SHAHI HAS CANCELLED HIS MID-AUGUST TRIP TO KABUL. THE GOP HAS CITED RENEWED ANTI-PAKISTANI PROPAGANDA, ANOTHER AFGHAN INCURSION OF PAKISTANI AIR SPACE, AND THE DRA'S DECISION TO PUBLICIZED THE DEFECTION (THE PAKS SAY KIDNAPPING) OF A PAKISTANI DIPLOMAT IN KABUL AS REASONS FOR CALLING A HALT--AT LEAST FOR NOW--TO THE KABUL-ISLAMABAD DIALOGUE [2 WORDS ILLEG] IT'S VISIT TO ISLAMABAD IN EARLY JULY.

